

# Bits of Bytes

Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, Colorado Springs, CO

Volume XLIII

January 2023

Issue 1

## Meeting Minutes

by Greg Lenihan,  
P\*PCompAS Secretary

President Cary Quinn opened the 3 December 2022 membership meeting at 9:08 am. David George made the coffee, and Greg Lenihan brought doughnuts. A \$1 donation is requested from members for doughnuts and coffee. A motion was made to approve the November minutes in the newsletter and the motion passed.

### OFFICER REPORTS

President Cary Quinn said he would put his hat in the ring as president next year and if he is not present for a meeting, others can run the meeting. We have several videos to show today.

Secretary/Newsletter Editor Greg Lenihan announced the next newsletter deadline is 24 December.

Treasurer Toni Logan stated our savings account grew by another 11 cents and currently is at \$2783.23. Checking stands at \$21.74 for a combined total of \$2804.97. We paid \$50 for APCUG dues. Toni also went through her proposed budget for next year as posted in the November newsletter. A motion was made to approve the budget and it passed unanimously.

Membership Chair Ann Titus said an anonymous donor paid the membership dues for everyone for the next year.

Librarian Paul Godfrey had nothing to report.

APCUG Rep/Webmaster Joe Nuvolini had nothing to report.

BOD Chair Ann Titus had nothing to report.

## Next P\*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 7 January 2023

A presentation has not been announced.

### OLD BUSINESS

Cary Quinn said our monthly breakfast will continue to be at Perkins.

John Pearce brought in a CZUR microphone/camera solution that Judy Taylour recommended. The camera worked well, but we still seem to have problems with audio. John will probably return the \$76 device to Amazon.

Joe Nuvolini said Natalie at the church has not heard from Paul Godfrey about the two screens his church is selling. Paul said he has sent two e-mails. Joe recommends that Paul call her during the middle of the week.

Greg Lenihan helped Joe Nuvolini set up equipment before the meeting to learn the setup because Joe has been having trouble physically setting up the laptop/projector/router.

Joe Nuvolini turned over club 501(c)3 and IRS information to Treasurer Toni Logan to handle our transactions. John Pearce also has some of that information. Cary asked if Toni can print a hard copy of that information.

### NEW BUSINESS

During a break, we installed a Steve Gibson program on our club laptop that changes the Registry so that Windows 11 will not install.

Joe Nuvolini will do his CES presentation at the February meeting.

There was an election for officers for next year. Those elected were Cary Quinn, President; Vice President, Paul Godfrey; Treasurer,

Toni Logan; Secretary, Greg Lenihan; BOD member, Bob Logan; BOD member, Barbara McMinn.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next social breakfast meeting will be Saturday, 17 December, at Perkins, starting at 8:00 am.

Our next membership meeting is Saturday, 7 January 2023.

### AROUND THE ROOM

John Pearce found that a once-a-month backup on his old laptop that died was not good enough for some things. John also misplaced the Acronis bootable CD he had made. His old ISO file for Acronis was on his backup. He bought an external enclosure for his old hard drive to copy files to the new machine. He is having trouble reinstalling some Thunderbird files that it says it can't find.

Warren Hill was back in Colorado Springs recently and

*Continued on page 3*

## In This Issue

### Articles

5 Ways to Speed Up Your Windows PC in 5 Minutes or Less.....	8
Is OneDrive a Backup? .....	7
Tip: Search Within a Specific Site ...	9
Unwanted Gift Cards?.....	5
What Internet Speeds Do You Really Need? .....	3

### P\*PCompAS

Meeting Minutes .....	1
-----------------------	---



**Officers**

**President: Cary Quinn**  
*cary.quinn@gmail.com*

**Vice President: Paul Godfrey**  
*godfrey2724@comcast.net*

**Secretary: Greg Lenihan**  
*glenihan@comcast.net*

**Treasurer: Antoinette Logan**  
*antoinettelogan@gmail.com*

**Staff**

**APCUG Rep/Webmaster: Joe Nuvolini**

**Barista: David George**

**Drawings: Cary Quinn**

**Editor: Greg Lenihan**

**Librarian: Paul Godfrey**

**Membership: Ann Titus**

**Committees**

**Audio: A.J. Whelan**

**Hospitality: Vacant**

**Programs: Paul Godfrey**

**Publicity: Vacant**

**Nominating: Vacant**

**Board of Directors**

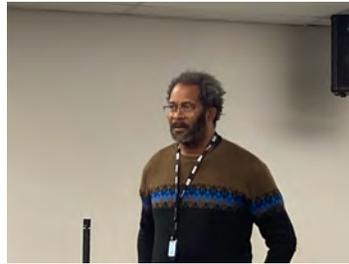
**Harvey McMinn**

**A.J. Whelan**

**John Pearce**

**Bob Logan**

**Barbara McMinn**



**President Cary Quinn at the December meeting.**



**Members in attendance at the December meeting.**



**The newsletter editor shows off his unique sense of humor.**

The Pikes Peak Computer Application Society newsletter is a monthly electronic publication. Any material contained within may be reproduced by a nonprofit user group, provided proper credit is given to the authors and this publication, and notification of publication is sent to the editor. Any opinions contained in this newsletter are made solely by the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect or represent the opinions of P\*PCompAS, its officers, or the membership. P\*PCompAS disclaims any liability for damages resulting from articles, opinions, statements, representations or warranties expressed or implied in this publication.

P\*PCompAS welcomes any comments, letters, or articles from members and non-members alike. Please send any articles to the editor (see last page for address). The editor reserves the right to reject, postpone, or edit for space, style, grammar, and clarity of any material submitted.

## What Internet Speeds Do You Really Need?

by Dave McQuilling, reprinted with permission from [ReviewGeek.com](https://www.reviewgeek.com)

Original article at: <https://www.reviewgeek.com/133369/what-internet-speeds-do-you-really-need/>



Businesses thrive by selling people things they don't need, and if you have an internet connection, there's a good chance your provider has tried to upsell you a high-tech-sounding package. But is it something that can make a difference in your life, or will you just be wasting money?

We live in a time where ultra-fast internet is available almost everywhere. Cities have cheap fiber packages where gigabit speeds cost around the same as a few cups of coffee. Smaller metropolitan areas might include monopolies that overcharge their customers, but a good variety of speeds are still on the table. And even rural areas cursed with dial-up as recently as a few years ago now have a somewhat reasonably priced [high-speed option](#)

[on the table with Starlink.](#)

But if you're in an area with many options, what should you go for? Splashing out on the fastest package might be tempting, especially if it isn't much more expensive than one of the basic deals. But, depending on your circumstances, there's a good chance that you'll be wasting that extra money.

### Be Aware of What You're Actually Getting

The English language has many nuances, and the phrase "up to" is potent yet often overlooked. Put it before something like 1 GB/s, and the person reading it might ignore the phrase "up to" all together and get it in their heads that they'll be getting the speed they believe has been advertised. However, the sentence "broadband speeds of up to 1 GB/s" just means your internet speed shouldn't exceed that figure; it's a cap, not a baseline. While many companies do hit their targets, others hit the mark they are advertising in a couple of areas and use that to justify the fact they're essentially lying to their customers everywhere else. So make sure your internet provider is delivering what you expect from them.

Even if you're getting the speeds that you were promised through your modem, that doesn't mean

*Continued on page 4*

### Meeting Minutes (Cont. from page 1)

stopped by Tech For Less to get some deals.

Joe Nuvolini has Xfinity TV like his brother-in-law and was not aware that there was a feature called "Smart Resume" on recordings to move through commercials. Several in the group use that feature.

Cary Quinn says there is a feature on Roku TVs called Live TV Recording. You can use a thumb drive in your Roku with a spare USB port to start recording, and fast forward through commercials or rewind if you need to.

John Linder asked where he can get rid of old CRT and flat-screen TVs. He can try Blue Star

Recycling, or the El Paso County Household Hazardous Waste facility on Akers Drive that has free "Clean Sweep" events several times a year. Otherwise, the county facility has restrictions on TVs the rest of the year.

Greg Lenihan bought a whole Microsoft Office 2021 Suite from [stacksocial.com](https://stacksocial.com) for \$40.

Harvey McMinn bought two wi-fi camera lightbulbs with AJ Whelan and could never get it to work. Seems you had to pay their \$99 per year fee for the cloud, which they neglected to mention. Support did not really want to give them their money back, so they offered the bulbs to two members in attendance. Harvey also demonstrated a Walabot, which is a

handheld device that shows what is behind a wall (like a stud finder) and displays it on a smartphone.

Bob Kotz has an ink plan for his HP printer. He has been getting lots of ink and wants to quit the plan, but then his printer will quit working without the plan.

### PRESENTATION

Ann Titus showed two videos. "What to Know About USB-C" explained types of connectors and versions. Hewie Poplock from Tech for Senior showed "How to Add Streaming Services to a Smart TV" and mentioned many streaming services he uses (Pluto TV, Plex, Freevee, etc.). Cary Quinn showed a video on using Portable Apps. ☺

### *Internet Speeds (Continued from page 3)*

your devices will be connected at those speeds. Your internet's bandwidth is split between the devices that are connected to it. While every device you have connected won't demand the same amount of bandwidth, they will all take a slice. So if your router is pumping out 100 Mbps, and you have a TV, a laptop, and a couple of cellphones connected simultaneously, none of those devices will show 100 Mbps on a speed test.

#### **Living Alone Has Its Benefits**

As I've mentioned, the more devices you have connected, the more bandwidth you will need. A couple of decades ago, most houses would have had one PC and maybe a games console, but that's no longer the case. People tend to have their own devices now, so a family of four is likely to have several smartphones, laptops, and TVs all fighting for a slice of your modem's output.

Logically, the more people you have in your household, the higher bandwidth you'll need. Various things, like an older router, poor signal distribution throughout the house, or an issue with a device, can slow your connection speeds to a crawl. But if you've noticed the internet is lightning fast while everyone else is out of the house, but it starts to lag when your spouse/children/roommates are at home and online, your bandwidth may be the problem.

US News [recommends a connection speed of more than 25 Mbps](#) for a household of four people who live in a "high-use" household. The website also claims a three-person household of "moderate" internet users can get away with 12.5 Mbps to 25 Mbps of bandwidth. But those estimates seem a bit low.

#### **Some Online Activities are More Demanding Than Others**

Even smaller households may need connection speeds faster than 25 Mbps due to global events over the last couple of years. The coronavirus pandemic caused significant changes in how we live our day-to-day lives — and while it may now be winding down, some of those changes are hanging around.

Remote work and schooling can put a heavy strain on your internet connection. You need to look out for a few things if your household is still working or learning remotely. Firstly, there's the number of video calls you're required to do. These are highly demanding both in terms of

download and upload speed.

Then there is the matter of actually submitting your work. An online service like Google Docs can usually handle it if you mainly deal with text documents. But if you produce large video or image files for a living, uploading those can take a while if your internet connection's upload speed isn't on point. Upload speed often gets overlooked when shopping for an internet plan, so even if your download speed is lightning quick, your upload speed may lag behind.

Finally, you may have remote work that requires you to interact directly with a device in the office. Remote desktop software tends to need a specialized VPN and [can take up a good amount of bandwidth](#) — especially if you're watching a video on the remote PC. If your remote job requires you to use a work computer from a distance, it is worth beefing up your home internet connection.

#### **Demands Are Going to Keep Increasing**

Another factor that could emerge if Mark Zuckerberg gets his way is [remote work via virtual reality](#). One of the Metaverse's key goals was to get people working and collaborating remotely through the medium of VR. This is highly demanding, both in terms of hardware requirements and the demands it places on your internet connection. [Even Meta's staff aren't on board with this yet](#) — so don't rush out and buy a Quest Pro and a WiFi 6e router. But it is something to keep an eye on.

Video is also getting sharper, with 8K hitting the market a few years ago. It isn't mainstream yet, but everyone thought 1080p was fine a few years ago, and now we have households where nothing less than 4K will do. You also have to consider the fact that [everything from lightbulbs to toasters requires an internet connection](#) these days. So don't be shocked if you buy something as benign as a coat rack in 10 years and spot it tossing your jacket on the floor because your connection speeds aren't meeting its demands. The chrome-coated snob.

#### **Don't Pay for More Than Your Router Can Handle**

Bottlenecking is something you should always be aware of when dealing with technology. [With PC building](#), it happens when an inexperienced builder goes all out on something like a GPU while skimping on another part, like the processor. The processor will hit its limit before the GPU maxes

*Continued on page 5*

## ***Unwanted Gift Cards? Here's What to Do...***

*By Bob Rankin, <http://askbobrankin.com>, published through the APCUG*

Remember that gift card you got from Aunt Martha for Christmas or your birthday last year? Yeah, the one for that seafood place that's 2 hours away? You know you'll never use it. But rather than throw it away, here's how to convert it, and other unwanted gift cards to cash. You can even cash in a pre-paid Visa, MasterCard, or American Express debit card that's collecting lint in your wallet. Read on for details, and some bonus tips on how to buy gift cards at a discount!

### **Online Gift Card Exchanges**

A survey from CreditCards.com found that nearly half of U.S. adults have at least one unused gift card, pre-paid card, store credit, or voucher. The average amount per person is \$175, with a shocking nationwide tally of over \$20 billion in unused funds. So it should be obvious why stores want to sell gift cards, instead of actual merchandise. If you have a stack of unused or unwanted gift cards, you can

trade them or sell them for cold, hard cash.

Several websites act as gift card exchanges, buying unwanted cards for less than the value stored on them and reselling them at higher prices (though still less than stored value). Some sites offer up to 92% of stored value for certain cards, and resell cards for as little as 65% of their stored value. There are also ways to get cash for a pre-paid Visa, MasterCard, AmEx, or Discover card.

What you may get for a given card depends on how easily the buyer can resell it. A Walmart gift card has a higher cash value than a card from your local vegan restaurant, or the Rubber Duck Superstore, simply because there are more potential buyers. The discount the buyer figures they will have to give when they sell the card also affects what they can offer for it.

A typical gift card sale via a card exchange website goes like this:

*Continued on page 6*

### ***Internet Speeds (Cont. from page 4)***

out its capabilities, and you've just wasted money on an expensive part that will never reach its potential.

The concept of bottlenecking isn't just limited to PCs, and you shouldn't be throwing fist fulls of money at your internet provider if your home network isn't up to par. Many of the issues that spread your bandwidth thinly will max out a router. Arguably, a router is even more badly affected because not everything connected to it requires internet access, but it has to manage those devices one way or another.

Similarly, your internet connection will also suffer if your router's signal is weak in certain areas of the house. So if you have a bit of extra budget and are still using the router your ISP provided when you signed up, it might be worth dropping a few hundred bucks on [a modern mesh network](#) before looking at new internet plans.

### **So, What Speeds Do You Really Need?**

If you live alone and only use the internet for light browsing, you can survive happily on the cheaper broadband package available. Even if you like streaming UHD movies and gaming online, 25 Mbps is more than enough for a single user as things stand. Most internet packages in large parts of the US seem to hover around the 100 Mbps mark, which should be more than adequate for the average family.

There are a few reasons you might consider a package that offers more than 100 Mbps, but this is unlikely to apply to most of the population. If you have a large household where [more than six people perform demanding tasks](#) like streaming videos in 4K, then it's worth the upgrade. If you download a lot of large files for whatever reason, you may

appreciate the higher speeds individual devices can hit with a faster connection.

You could also be rubbing your hands together at the prospect of 8K streaming. Ultra HD video is currently a thing, [but the streams are hard to come by](#). The equipment you need to enjoy [it is ludicrously expensive](#). The recommended connection speed for [enjoying 8K video on YouTube is 100 Mbps](#). Still, that isn't something you're guaranteed to hit if you're paying for a package with speeds "up to" 100 Mbps. Equally, if anyone else is using the internet for anything at the time, your speeds may dip below what your extremely high-quality video needs. So if you want to be an early adopter and your family has high demands, it's probably time to [start looking at gigabit packages](#). Though you're probably better off [saving your money and sticking to 4K](#). 😊

*Gift Cards (Continued from page 5)*

AskBobRankin.com

- You type the card issuer's name (e. g., "Target") and the amount stored on it into an app or website, and get an offer.
- If you like the offer, you may be able to enter the card's serial number and PIN to submit it electronically. Otherwise, you'll have to mail the physical card to the buyer.
- After verifying the legitimacy of the card and the amount stored on it, the buyer sends payment to you.

Each card exchange has its own wrinkles on the basic process. [CardSell](#) has apps for iOS and Android that help you trade gift cards for cash. They promise that if you download the app, enter your gift card information, they will verify your card and deposit the agreed amount in your PayPal account within 48 hours. But the reviews are overwhelmingly bad. The most common remark is along the lines of "They took my card and I never got paid!" **Stay away from this one.**

It pays to shop around for the best rate on the card(s) you want to buy or sell. It also pays to do some due diligence on a card exchange before handing over your cards. [CardCash](#) is another site you can check out before deciding where to sell a gift card for cash, or buy one at a discount. They've been around since 2011 and have been featured in Bloomberg and the New York Times. CardCash promises to sell your unwanted gift cards for "up to 92% cash back." They buy cards from Amazon, Bed Bath and Beyond, CVS, eBay, Home Depot, Kohl's, Lowe's, Starbucks, and others.

CardCash also has options for bulk buyers and sellers, offering lower rates than the standard rates available on their website. A dedicated sales rep will hold cards for you, or negotiate on your behalf for better rates.

**Buy or Sell?**

It's great to trade in your unwanted gift cards for cash. But you can also save money by purchasing a discounted gift card. Let's say you plan to buy something. At CardCash, I saw a 42.56% discount on a Tony Roma's restaurant gift card, and dozens of others discounted at 20% or more. There are plenty of others, but the biggest discount I found on the site was for 20% at Applebee's. The larger discounts typically require the purchase of higher-dollar cards. You can get \$5 off your first order of \$25 or more.

[Sams Club has a page](#) where you can purchase certain gift cards at a discount. Some deals are better than others. A \$50 Bob Evans or Krispy Kreme gift card sells for \$37.50. That's a nice 25% discount. But a \$75 card for Outback Steakhouse is \$74.88, and a \$25 Jo-Ann Craft card is \$24.98. You save a whopping 0.08%!

Some gift card exchanges limit the amount of money in which it will deal. Some will buy or sell cards with up to \$5,000 stored value, while others draw the line at \$200. Most exchanges require a minimum of \$20 in stored value, but you can combine the smaller values stored on multiple cards in one sale.

**What About Pre-Paid Cards?**

I mentioned above that in addition to unloading your unwanted gift cards for cash, you can also tap the value in a pre-paid Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover card. [PrePaid2Cash.com](#) offers apps for consumers to access their prepaid card funds. You can get cash via direct deposit for most branded prepaid card programs as well as gift cards from Walmart, Nordstrom, Best Buy, and many other popular retail brands.

Using P2C's iOS or Android app, you scan your prepaid card, agree to the terms, and you can have the funds transferred directly into your bank account in as little as 15 minutes. For the "Instant" (15-minute) option, there is a 15% processing fee plus \$1.50 for delivery of the funds. If you opt for Next Business Day, the processing fee is 7.5% plus \$1.50 for delivery. The Prepaid2Cash app is available in the iTunes App Store and Google Play, and the reviews are very positive.

**Other Options For Cashing In**

The best exchange rate - 100% - may be available in a variety of other ways. The simplest is to use the card to buy something,

*Continued on page 7*

## Is OneDrive a Backup?

*Assuming it is can put your data at risk.*

By Leo A. Notenboom, <https://newsletter.askleo.com/>; published under the Creative Commons License



OneDrive is a powerful tool, but thinking of it as a backup can take you down a dangerous path.

*I wanted to let you know about an issue my sister had with her computer. Several months ago I persuaded her to backup her pictures, documents and photos to OneDrive. All good, she did that. But a month ago her computer crashed. When I remotely installed her new computer, all her data was there. BUT she also had software which was not included.*

I know this is counter-intuitive and perhaps even a little controversial, but while OneDrive can be an important *part* of a comprehensive [backup](#) strategy, OneDrive is not by itself a backup.

Confusing it with backups can lead to situations such as the one described above, where some things are kind of backed up, like the data you have stored in OneDrive, but the programs installed on your machine are not.

Let's examine why that is and what you should be doing instead.

In Short

### Is OneDrive a backup?

OneDrive has many features that are like backups, but it also has characteristics that make it act not like a backup at all. While you can use OneDrive as an important part of an overall backup strategy, it's critical not to rely on it solely or for things it's not designed to deal with. OneDrive is no substitute for a regular image backup.

#### OneDrive is one place

*If it's in only one place, it's not backed up.* I've been saying it for a long time. It's the very definition of not being backed up.

#### OneDrive is only one place.

Yes, I know, OneDrive replicates files to the [cloud](#) and to other machines (maybe), but it's still just one place.

For example, if you delete a file in OneDrive, it's also deleted from all those other places. It's acting exactly as if it were a single place.

More importantly, if you lose access to your OneDrive account or someone hacks the account, you can also lose all the files within it instantly and permanently, including OneDrive's recycle bin.

Placing files in OneDrive is simply choosing a new location for those files that carries many of the risks associated with being only one place.

*Continued on page 8*

#### *Gift Cards (Continued from page 6)*

either online or at a retail store. If it's a pre-paid debit card, it should work like a credit card at checkout. At some stores, you can use multiple payment cards in a single transaction. You get the goods, and there's no fee involved.

Consider calling the issuing merchant and asking for a refund of

the balance on an unwanted card. It doesn't always work, but it does often enough to be worth a toll-free call to the customer service number on the back of the card.

You may also be able to withdraw funds from a prepaid card at an ATM. Most pre-paid Visa or MasterCard debit or credit cards have a PIN. Insert your card, and enter the PIN, if you're lucky, the

machine will spit out cash. If that doesn't work, head to the bank with your prepaid Visa card, and ask about cashing out the balance on the card. You may incur a fee ranging from \$2 to \$10.

PayPal and Venmo give you the option of adding prepaid cards to your online wallet. You can then spend it easily at stores that accept PayPal or Venmo at checkout. ☺

## 5 Ways to Speed Up Your Windows PC in 5 Minutes or Less

by Jason Fitzpatrick, reprinted with permission from [HowToGeek.com](https://www.howtogeek.com)

Original article at: <https://www.howtogeek.com/853296/5-ways-to-speed-up-your-windows-pc-in-5-minutes-or-less/>

Everybody loves a quick fix and, thankfully, a lot of simple Windows optimizations are easy to apply. If you're dealing with a sluggish Windows PC, you owe it to yourself to try one (or all!) of these tweaks.

### Audit Your Startup Programs

You know how letting your web browser get bogged down with a pile of extensions just ruins the browsing experience? Well, Windows isn't much different. Except instead of extensions, the dead weight comes from loading everything and the kitchen sink when Windows starts.

Performing [a startup program audit](#) is really simple, and you'll see immediate results on your next boot. You can even get results immediately by closing any unneeded apps piled up in [the notification tray](#).

### Disable Windows Animations

This one is more of a psychological hack than an actual performance hack. Windows has a plethora of little animations that you may have never really paid much attention to (like the animation for minimizing and maximizing windows).

When you see the animation, it feels like something is happening (and taking time in the process). When you [disable the animations](#) the action appears to happen instantly. You're not going to see a performance change at the CPU-utilization level or anything, but the computer will *feel* faster.

### Check Disk Utilization

Just like your phone starts acting weird when you pack it too full of apps and photos, your computer does the same. Windows needs a certain amount of free space for daily operations, saving files for hibernation, and so on.

Now's the time to take advantage of [Window's disk space management tools](#) and free up some space.

[Updates in early 2022 to the popular disk cleaning app CCleaner](#) make it even more useful, so if you're a fan of the app, make sure you're running the most current edition to give your PC an even deeper clean.

*Continued on page 9*

### OneDrive Backup (Cont. from page 7)

#### Related

OneDrive's own "Important PC Folders" backup feature, besides being confusing as heck, is also not really a backup. Why? Because it *moves* the folders you select into OneDrive. OneDrive remains only one place. If the files are deleted anywhere, they're deleted on your machine — be it by you or by someone who's gained malicious access to your OneDrive account.

#### OneDrive isn't everything

As you discovered, you don't put everything in OneDrive. It's designed primarily for your documents and other data files. Program files that you install on your PC are not included, nor is Windows itself. Thus, even if it were

a backup (which it isn't), OneDrive could never [back up](#) the installed programs or anything else on your PC.

You need more.

#### OneDrive as part of a healthy breakfast

OneDrive can absolutely be an important *part* of a comprehensive backup strategy.

For example:

- Regularly scheduled full image backups will back up absolutely everything, including your data and installed programs. I recommend doing this daily.
- Placing your data files in OneDrive provides an additional level of safety in part by replicating the files elsewhere as they change, and most

importantly by storing them off-site in case anything happens to your equipment at your home or business.

- Enabling File History gives you another safety net by copying files to an external drive as they change.

My recommended setup is outlined in [How to Back Up Windows 10 \(& 11\)](#).

#### Do this

Back up, of course.

But perhaps as important, understand what a backup is and is not, and make sure the tools you're using are actually backing up.

If it's in only one place, it's not backed up. "One place" can mean one physical place, but it can also mean "one service" — like OneDrive. ☺

## Tip: Search Within a Specific Site with Google

Turn Google into a specific search engine for any website using just the tab button on your computer.

1. Begin typing the address of the site you'd like to search and Google will automatically complete the URL for you, if you've visited it in the past. Otherwise, write out the entire URL, for example: HowToGeek.com.
2. Don't press Enter. Instead, press the Tab key.
3. The URL will convert to a search engine for that particular website.
4. Now, type in your search term and press Enter.



Note: This works in Edge and Chrome. For Safari and Firefox, you can use this trick: Enter your search term, along with "site:" followed by the website you want to search. For example, you might put in "tech news site:gizmodo.com" to search this website for tech news. ☺

---

### *5 Ways to Speed Up (Cont. from page 8)*

And it's never a bad time to consider upgrading a small hard drive to a bigger one. There is no time like the present to swap your small or old mechanical HDD with [a spacious SSD](#).

You might not be able to pull off an upgrade in our suggested 5-minute window, but it's worth putting aside a few hours on Saturday as [an HDD to SSD upgrade](#) is about the single most effective speed upgrade you could ask for short of buying a new computer.

### **Remove Unused Apps and Purge Bloatware**

If you have the space to spare and the apps don't load on startup, there isn't much harm in leaving an app just sitting there if you think you might need it in the future.

But, if you have applications you don't use that come with a slew of "helper" apps that give you a performance hit at Windows startup or that just have huge files clogging up your disk, uninstalling them is a great way to get a free performance boost. Windows will load faster, extra space on the disk makes everything run more efficiently, and there's just not much downside.

In addition to the apps you installed, be sure to look at the apps you didn't. If you bought a prebuilt machine from a major manufacturer like Dell, HP, and so on, there is a good chance that it's packed with bloatware apps you don't need.

Manufacturers *love* [packing prebuilt Windows PC with bloatware](#).

You can manually remove bloatware, but if you run into some really tricky and enmeshed bloatware that won't budge, consider [using Window's "Fresh Start"](#) function.

### **Scan for Malware**

Old school viruses and malware tended to have a dramatic effect like your computer crashing because critical files were deleted. While those kinds of viruses never went away entirely, the new motivation behind releasing malware isn't primarily mayhem but access to resources.

In the case of your computer, the resource is computing power and the internet connection. So often times a malware infection will make your computer feel sluggish because even though you're not using all the system resources up, *somebody else* is.

Make sure Windows Defender is up to date, and it never hurts to tack on an additional tool like [Malwarebytes](#).

While Windows Defender is a solid antivirus solution, Malwarebytes does an excellent job not just catching malicious software but also [notifying you of Potentially Unwanted Programs \(PUPs\)](#)—software that isn't explicitly a virus but that you probably don't want on your computer. ☺

**P\*PCompAS Newsletter**  
**Greg Lenihan, Editor**  
**4905 Ramblewood Drive**  
**Colorado Springs, CO 80920**  
**e-mail: [glenihan@comcast.net](mailto:glenihan@comcast.net)**



**Coming Events:**

**Next Membership Meeting: 7 January beginning at 9 am (see directions below)**

**Next Breakfast Meeting: 21 January @ 8:00 am, Perkins, 3295 E. Platte Ave.**

**Newsletter Deadline: 21 January**

**Check out our Web page at: <http://ppcompas.apcug.org>**

